

Tawheed Class #2

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CLASS TWO

Last week, we gave a little introduction on our classical study of Al-Usool Ath-Thalaathah. Then we mentioned the three aspects of Tawheed in Bismillah and two grammatical rules in Bismillah. Then we mentioned proof for initiating your actions with Bismillah, because it is a matter of Ibaadah that needs proof. Then we mentioned a portion of the blessings of Allah when you say Bismillah. We are not done with Bismillah and here I say, you need patience, we all need patience in our study. Sometimes we are going to pick up the pace and sometimes we are going to slow down. Sometimes we are going to pick up the pace because it is obvious, or in the future we are going to study it in more detail. Sometimes, like here, we need to know it, this is our first verse in Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. You have to fully encompass the meaning and really, we can go into more depth in this, but we have to understand as students of knowledge, somewhat of what Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem means.

Having said that, when you do your outline, write the topic so I will not lose count. For example, Bismillah, and then put the numbers under it, or an asterisk and the points that we are talking about. It is a systematic study and it is not sporadic stuff, so organise it.

DO YOU SAY BISMILLAH OR BISMILLAHIR-RAHMAANIR-RAHEEM?

The general rule is when there is no specific proof on a certain matter, you can say the entire Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. For example, writing a book, you are writing in day to day activity, you can say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem not just Bismillah. It is Mustahabb, you can say Bismillah or Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. In fact, matters like writing a book, you have proof to back up saying the entire Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, from what the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did in Sulh al-Hudaybiyyah (صلح الحديبية). So a matter where there is no specific proof, you can say Bismillah or Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem.

Now, there are matters where there is specific proof that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam only said Bismillah (Bismillah without Ar-Rahmaanir-Raheem). Like eating for example, do you say Bismillah or Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem when you eat? In this matter, there is specific proof. There is a Hadith in Sunan at-Tirmidhi narrated by Aishah radhiallahu 'anha that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said, when you eat say Bismillah. If you forget it in the beginning, then say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَوَّلَهُ وَآخِرَهُ

Look at that, he did not say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ أَوَّلَهُ وَآخِرَهُ

In this Hadith, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said Bismillah for eating and he repeated it twice. Once if you say it originally and the second time, what to say if you forgot it. Bismillah in the beginning and if you forget it, you say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَوَّلَهُ وَآخِرَهُ

This Hadith is also narrated by Ibn Masood and Ibn Hajar Rahimahullah said this Hadith is the most forthright Hadith on this matter (meaning saying Bismillah when you eat). The problem for example is, an-Nawawi in his book Al-Adhkaar (الأذكار) said it is better to say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem when you eat, than it is to say Bismillah. Ibn Taymiyyah said it is permissible to say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. However, Ibn Hajar commented on the statement of an-Nawawi, saying I do not know where there is any proof to say it is better to say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem than it is to say Bismillah.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said in a Hadith narrated by Samurah, If I tell you a Hadith, do not add to my saying:

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، قَالَ : إِذَا حَدَّثْتُكُمْ حَدِيثًا فَلَا تَزِيدَنَّ عَلَيَّ

Do not add to Ahaadith I tell you. The general meaning of it is when you learn something, do not add to that Hadith, but it also means in application (in Ibaadah). You yourself in your private Ibaadah, do not add. If he did not say Ar-Rahmaanir-Raheem, do not add.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was teaching a young boy (the Hadith we mentioned last week). The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam does not ever hide anything, specifically when he teaches. He is a legislator and when he sees something, he is legislating. When he told Umar Ibn Abi Salamah, he said:

قُلْ : بِسْمِ اللَّهِ ، وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ

Say Bismillah.

Some say what is the big deal here? Why are you making a big deal, Bismillah or Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem? This issue is an issue of Ibaadah. In Ibaadah, we adhere strictly to proof because anyone who adds to Ibaadah or any matter of Islam, it is like they are saying to Allah and the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, you do not know, I want to add a little bit from my own. That is what you are saying when you are adding innovation in Islam.

In Hadith Muslim, Umaarah Ibn Ru'aybah saw Bishr Ibn Marwaan raising his hands in the pulpit on Friday. He said, may Allah disgrace those two hands:

قَبَّحَ اللَّهُ هَاتَيْنِ الْيَدَيْنِ

He said I saw the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam on the pulpit and he never went beyond this (meaning he raised his index finger). The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam only did this, where did you come up with this? An-Nawawi commented on this and said the Sunnah is not to raise your hands during the Khutbah. I wrote an [article](#) on this several months ago because at a local Masjid here where I attended Jumu'ah, a young Khateeb got up and commented on this saying you should not raise your hands. And you know, commotion broke out, how can you say do not raise your hands? So you can refer to that article for more detail on raising your hands in Jumu'ah.

Even more than the Hadith of Umaarah, in Mustadarak al-Haakim, Ibn Umar radhiallahu 'anhu saw a man sneeze. What do you say when you sneeze? You say Alhamdulillah. The man sneezed in front of Ibn Umar and said Alhamdulillah was-Salaatu was-Salaam 'Ala Rasoolillah (he added was-Salaatu was-Salaam 'Ala Rasoolillah). It has a beautiful meaning, peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Some say what is wrong with adding that, it is a nice addition to Alhamdulillah. Ibn Umar deterred him from that addition. He wanted him to stick with Alhamdulillah, period. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said Alhamdulillah, period.

Ibn Abdeen said it is disliked to add was-Salaatu was-Salaam 'Ala Rasoolillah when you sneeze and say Alhamdulillah. As-Suyooti said it is affirmatively a vilified Bid'ah (Alhamdulillah was-Salaatu was-Salaam 'Ala Rasoolillah when you sneeze), even though the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam started some of his Khutub with that. What is wrong if you add praise to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to Alhamdulillah when you sneeze? After you sneeze, say Alhamdulillah, period, because the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said Alhamdulillah, period. If someone responds to you, then when you are done, go and say as-Salaatu was-Salaam 'Ala Rasoolillah a thousand times.

Here, we have the issue of eating. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam is telling Umar Ibn Abi Salamah:

إِذَا أَكَلْتَ فَقُلْ : بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ

He did not say, say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. You have the Hadith of Aishah and Ibn Masood (the Hadith that Ibn Hajr said is the most forthright Hadith on this issue), so it is best to stick with what the Hadith said.

There are some other matters where the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam specified only Bismillah. For example, relationship with your spouse.

In Bukhari and Muslim:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا

When you go to the bathroom. Hadith Anas radhiallahu 'anhu:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْخُبْثِ وَالْخَبَائِثِ

Look at how Bismillah is specified in those. Other than these matters, where there is no specific proof or a Hadith just mentioning Bismillah alone, you are free to mention the entire Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. Where the Hadith limits it to Bismillah, stick to Bismillah.

THE NAME ALLAH

ALLAH: THE SOLE TITLE FOR THE LORD THAT FASHIONED EVERYTHING

Allah is a name that is only for Allah.

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ ۚ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ

لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴿مَرْيَم: ٦٥﴾

Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. Do you know of any who is similar to Him? (Surat Maryam: 65)

هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا

Do you know anyone who is similar to Him? Do you know what that question at the end of this verse is? It is not a question that needs an answer. It is like a rhetorical question, it is a question that is used to make a point. Some scholars said the meaning of this (do you know of any similar to Him) is that there is no one other than Allah with the name Allah.

THE ROOT OF THE NAME ALLAH

Allah is derivative from the word Ilaah (إله). The root word is Ilaah, as Ibn al-Qayyim and others said. Ilaah is from Uloohiyyah (oneness). Ilaah is oneness, that is the root word of Allah. Sibawayh said Alif and Laam were added to Ilaah as an honour and Ta'dheem (تعظيم) to Allah. When you add it, then you add the Shaddah and you take one of the Hamzah out, so it becomes Allah.

ALLAH USES ALLAH AND RABB IN THE QUR'AN

Look at how the Qur'an uses Allah and at other times it uses Rabb.

When Musa went to get the fire, his family were cold and he wanted light and fire, Allah says in the Qur'an:

إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿طه: ١٢﴾

“Verily! I am your Lord! So take off your shoes, you are in the sacred valley, Tuwa.” (Surat Taha: 12)

Verily Musa, I am your Lord. He uses Lordship because the setting was that of Lordship. Allah wanted to tell Musa, I take care of you and I sustain you. He is telling Musa, I protect you, I guard you and I nourish you. What are those aspects of? Rububiyyah.

Then shortly thereafter, Allah uses Allah in the same talk to Musa. He says:

وَأَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا
فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي ﴿١٤﴾ ﴿طه﴾

“And I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed [to you]. Verily! I am Allah! La Ilaaha Illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me, and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat) for My Remembrance. (Surat Taha: 13-14)

The second time, Allah says I am Allah, not Rabbuka (رَبُّكَ). He said Rabb a few moments ago, now He is saying Allah. Why? First, Musa was afraid so Allah is telling him I take care of you, I protect you, I maintain you and sustain you. The second statement was in a speech where Allah was telling Musa what is requested of Musa. That means Musa, you need to do this and you need to do that. What are those aspects of? Uloohiyyah, so Allah uses Allah.

The verse said:

فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

Worship me Musa, perform Salah. What are those? When you do those, they entail Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah so that is why Allah said:

إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ

In the first one, and:

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ

In the second one.

He could have used either one but these are to show you how sensitive the Qur'an is and how Allah and Rabb are used.

ALLAH IS DIFFERENT TO ANY OTHER NAMES

When you call Allah, you say Yaa Allah (with the Alif and Laam before, meaning 'The'). The linguistic scholars and scholars of the Salaf all said you say Yaa Allah. Do you ever say Yaa Al-Jabbaar, Yaa Al-Kareem or Yaa Ar-Raheem? No, you say Yaa Kareem, Yaa Raheem, Yaa Ghafoor (you take out the 'Al'). In Allah, you say Yaa Allah with the Alif and Laam before it. Unique, unlike any other names of Allah. Some like at-Tahhaawi and Ibn al-Qayyim used that as proof to substantiate that that is the mighty name of Allah, the one if one uses it to make a supplication, Allah will answer it. We will talk about that Inshaa Allah in the future when we talk about Asmaa' and Sifaat in detail.

THE NAME ALLAH BY ITSELF IS NOT A DHIKR

It is in Du'aa, it is in praise, it is in glorification, it is in the Shahaadah, but by itself it is not a form of Dhikr that we were taught by the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. So you do not go and say Allah, Allah, Allah one hundred times. You do not hold the beads and say Allah one hundred times. You say Alhamdulillah, you say Bismillah, you say Laa Ilaaha Illallah. You say Yaa Allah I need this, but Allah, Allah, Allah alone is not a form of Dhikr that we were taught.

ALLAH IS THE NAME THAT ALL HIS OTHER NAMES FOLLOW

The name Allah does not follow any of the other names, the other names of Allah follow the name Allah. Let me explain it with an example because you might have heard this statement before, but an example is going to clear the confused faces that I see. Al-Quddoos, Al-Azeez, Al-Jabbaar, Al-Khaaliq, all those are names of Allah. You do not say Allah is the name of Al-Azeez, you do not say that. You do not say Allah is the name of Ar-Rahmaan. You flip it and you say Al-Quddoos is the name of Allah. The first one is improper to say. You say Al-Azeez is the name of Allah, Ar-Rahmaan is the name of Allah. So the other names follow the name of Allah.

ASPECTS OF TAWHEED IN THE NAME ALLAH

We previously said in the last class that Bismillah entails all three aspects of Tawheed. You submit all three forms of Tawheed in Allah for any matter you say Bismillah to. That is in saying Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem or even Bismillah, and we mentioned that in the last class.

Now I am going to say the name Allah includes believing in all three types of Tawheed and implies that you must believe in all three types of Tawheed. Not even the name Allah, the root of Allah (Ilaah) is the three types of Tawheed and entails that you must believe in all three types.

توحيد الألوهية : متضمنٌ توحيد الربوبية ، بمعنى أن توحيد الربوبية جزءٌ

من معنى توحيد الألوهية

Tawheed ar-Rububiyyah is included as part of Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah, but the opposite is not true. The root word of Allah is Uloohiyyah (oneness) and included in the oneness is Rububiyyah, so you have two types of Tawheed there. Then Allah the name itself is Asmaa' so that is Tawheed al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat. That is three types of Tawheed in the name of Allah, not even in the name of Allah but in the root word of the name Allah (Ilaah).

THE MIGHTY NAME ALLAH

Allah is mentioned in the Qur'an two thousand, six hundred and two times according to al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras. It is the most popular name of Allah, the name chosen out of all the names to say your Shahaadah. When you say Shahaadah, you say Ash-Hadu Alla Ilaaha Illallah, it is chosen to say your Shahaadah.

When you utter that name, you are not uttering just any name, you are uttering the name of the Majestic, the Revered, the Sublime. Allah is the name you shout when you are in fear, to gain safety. Allah is the name that if you mention it in something scarce, seeking it to be blessed, it becomes plenty and even more. The name that those who are in fear call, to attain security. The name that those in distress call for relief. When they are in anguish, agony and sorrow, you call Allah. No one troubled or worried calls the name of Allah except that Allah relieves his troubles and his worries. There is not a poor that clings on to the name of Allah except that Allah makes him affluent. There is not an ill who clings on to the name of Allah except that he becomes healthy. The name when a distressed calls, he gets provided with safety. When a weak calls that name, He gives him power and honour. When an oppressed uses that name and calls that name (Allah), He grants him victory. Allah is the name to call when you want mercy, call Allah. Allah is the name to call for abundance and blessings. Allah is the name you call when you want to cleanse your sins. Allah is not any ordinary name. Do you feel what the name Allah is?

If one comprehended the meanings of the names of Allah, he would live in ultimate happiness. When you make Allah magnificent in your heart, your heart becomes the strongest, most firm, most pure heart, and at the same time it becomes a merciful heart because it has Allah in it. Allah is not any ordinary name. A heart that truly knows the meaning of the name Allah could never belittle a sin. When you say Bismillah by Fardh from Allah, you say the name of Allah by Fardh seventeen times. You have to say Bismillah seventeen times a day in your Salah (in al-Faatihah), in addition to tens of times you have to say it as Sunnah. Do not think it is just another normal word you are uttering, Allah is not a normal word you are uttering. Some have a higher regard when they are mentioning the names of their bosses, their kings, their spouses and their presidents, than they do when they mention the name of Allah. Check the level of your Imaan by knowing your feeling when you hear the name of Allah.

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ...

﴿الزمر: ٤٥﴾

And when Allah Alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter are filled with disgust. (Surat az-Zumar: 45)

The level of gratification, the level of comfort, the level of content, the level of tranquillity and happiness you feel when the name of Allah is mentioned, tells you the level of Imaan you have in your heart because of that verse. When you are saying Allah, you are saying the name of the One who raised seven skies with no pillars to hold them up. You are saying the name of the One who lowered seven earths under you by the word of Kun Fayakoon (كُنْ) (فَيَكُونُ). And then He created you from an emitted semen, as beautiful and in the best of all stature. Let that go through your mind every time you hear of a sentence with Allah in it. More importantly, remember all that when you say Allah.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ
مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿الزمر: ٦٧﴾

They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand. Glorified is He, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him! (Surat az-Zumar: 67)

Do not be like those who underestimate Allah. Do not ever be like that when you hear His name. It is something big, it is something huge.

AR-RAHMAAN AND AR-RAHEEM

AR-RAHMAAN

Rahmaan is the one who has the complete mercy, mercy that encompasses everything. This name is unique in that it is among the exclusive names to Allah. Ar-Rahmaan is an exclusive name to Allah. It is a name particular to Allah, Wasf (وصف) (description), like an adjective of mercy. Owner of the great, vast, ultimate, extensive mercy. The ultimate, complete mercy that is exclusive to no one other than Allah, that is Ar-Rahmaan.

Words in Arabic that are on the form or scale of Fa'laan (فعلان) indicate vastness and abundance, extensive. Meaning words that rhyme with the word Fa'laan, like Rahmaan,

Ghadrbaan (غضبان) and Sakraan (سكران) which are on the rhythm of Fa'laan (they all rhyme). For example, take it in how it pertains to human beings. When you say Ghadrbaan it means anger but not just anger, it means complete, enraged, ultimate anger. Atshaan (عطشان) (thirsty) means utmost, entire, complete, full thirst. Likewise with Ar-Rahmaan, and of course Allah has supreme examples. Ar-Rahmaan means a high scale of mercy that only belongs to Allah. Ar-Rahmaan is mentioned in the Qu'ran fifty seven times according to Mu'jam al-Mufahras. Ar-Rahmaan, the Most Compassionate. Ar-Rahmaan, the Most Gracious.

AR-RAHEEM

Ar-Raheem is a name which refers to the action, meaning the One whose mercy reaches to others. This name applies to Allah but restrictedly applies to others. It is mentioned one hundred and fourteen times in the Qur'an according to Mu'jam al-Mufahras. The mercy that encompasses His creation. This word (Raheem) is on the scale of Fa'eel (فعليل). In Arabic, words on the scale of Fa'eel are an intensified form of that action, reaching others. Allah is the Most Merciful to the universe and to His creation.

The name restrictedly applies to others. You can have mercy to your children, to your brothers and to your family. But of course, there is no way you can merely imagine comparing the mercy of Allah to the mercy of any of His creation, or even the mercy of His creations combined from the time of the creation until the Judgment Day. You cannot compare it. It is not even the weight of a feather or an atom or even less than that, compared to the mercy of Allah who is Ar-Raheem. Even though you may have some type of mercy which no one can deny, you can never compare your mercy to the mercy of Allah. That is what we mean when we say it restrictedly applies to others.

In Surat ash-Shoora, Allah says:

...لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿الشورى: ١١﴾

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer. (Surat ash-Shoora: 11)

In Surat al-An'aam, Allah says:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ ۖ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the Most Subtle and Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things. (Surat al-An'aam: 103)

AR-RAHMAAN AND AR-RAHEEM

Ar-Rahmaan is One who possesses the great, extensive mercy. Ar-Raheem is the One whose mercy goes on to His servants and creation. The phrase Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem indicates the great, vast, ultimate mercy of Allah.

There is a difference between Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem. No one can be named Ar-Rahmaan but some people of His creation can be named Ar-Raheem. No one can be named a name exclusive to Allah. Rahmaan is a restricted name to Allah, you cannot name that name. The utmost, the complete and the full mercy is only to Allah, you cannot have that. It is not a characteristic in you, so you cannot have that. Just like you cannot name Allah because you do not have the characteristics of Allah, you cannot name Ar-Rahmaan. It is an exclusive name to Allah.

Likewise, you cannot name Al-Khaaliq (the Creator), Ar-Razzaaq (the Sustainer), Al-Ahad, As-Samad, Al-Baari, Al-Qayyoom. Al-Khaaliq for example is One who creates something with no similar (no resemblance, no comparison, no similar comparison to it). Can you create something like that? You cannot, so you cannot be called Al-Khaaliq because you do not have that characteristic. Al-Baari is the Maker, One who makes something free from any deficiency. Can you make anything free of any deficiency? Of course you cannot do that, so you cannot be called Al-Baari.

Then there are some names that you can be named, like Ghani, Malik, Azeez, Jabbaar.

In the Qur'an, Allah describes the woman who accused Yusuf:

وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ امْرَأَتُ الْعَزِيزِ تُرَاوِدُ فَتَاهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ...

And women in the city said: "The wife of Al-Azeez is seeking to seduce her (slave) young man." (Surat Yusuf: 30)

The name of Allah is Al-Azeez and Allah calls her the wife of the Azeez. A Sahaabi during the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was named al-Hakeem. Hakeem Ibn Hizaam, Hakeem is a name of Allah.

Allah said in the Qur'an:

...كَذَلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ قَلْبٍ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ ﴿غافر: ٣٥﴾

Thus does Allah seal up the heart of every arrogant, tyrant. (Surat Ghaafir: 35)

He used the name Jabbaar to His creation. His name is Jabbaar and He uses that to His creation. This word is used ten times in the Qur'an and nine out of those ten times it is for people who are strong or oppressive, commit injustice, or those who do any type of Dhulm. The last time Al-Jabbaar is mentioned is in Surat al-Hashr and it refers to Allah.

When a human is permitted to name those, in one way or another it is in a negative sense. Even if mentioned positively, it has some kind of deficiency in it because you are human. When you mention Allah, then there is none like Allah. It is the complete, positive, ultimate example. It is the complete, utmost, positive quality of that name (whatever it means). That is the difference between Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem.

Look in the Qur'an, Allah said in the Qur'an:

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿النساء: ٥٨﴾

Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer. (Surat an-Nisaa': 58)

In Surat al-Insaan, Allah calls you that:

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿الانسان: ٢﴾

Verily, We have created man from Nutfah drops of mixed semen (discharge of man and woman), in order to try him, so We made him hearer, seer. (Surat al-Insaan: 2)

Allah says about you:

فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

And many times in the Qur'an, Allah says about Himself:

...وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ... ﴿الشورى: ١١﴾

And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer. (Surat ash-Shoora: 11)

Specifically this name Raheem can be named like that. You can name yourself or your child that (Raheem).

Allah says in the Qur'an:

...وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿الْأَحْزَابُ: ٤٣﴾

And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers. (Surat al-Ahzaab: 43)

This is about the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, He names His Prophet Raheema.

There are names from the names of Allah that you can be named, but always know that there is no way you can compare your quality to the quality of Allah.

Musaylamah the Liar decided to call himself Rahmaan, an exclusive name for Allah. As a punishment from Allah, Allah made him known as the Liar and exposed him. He chose the exclusive name of Allah (Ar-Rahmaan), his name was Rahmaan al-Yamaamah. Allah clothed him with the nickname the Liar, that he is known by all the way until the Judgment Day. If you say Rahmaan al-Yamaamah, does anyone today know him? No one knows him. History documents him as Musaylamah al-Kathaab (Musaylamah the Liar). That is his punishment for trying to use an exclusive name of Allah. He became an example of a liar among the residents of his cities and villages, the people in the deserts, the Bedouins and in history. A punishment for one who tries to use the exclusive name of Allah.

So the first difference between Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem is that you can name Ar-Raheem but you cannot name Ar-Rahmaan because one is exclusive to Allah and the other is not. Even with Raheem, there is different resemblance in the qualities (between creation and the Creator).

Ibn Jareer, al-Faarisi and others said Ar-Rahmaan is for all the creation (evil and non evil, human and non human), and Ar-Raheem is only for the believers. Ar-Rahmaan carries a broader scope of meaning pertaining to the mercy of Allah. That is basically what al-Faarisi, Ibn Jareer and others said and they used this proof:

...وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿الْأَحْزَابُ: ٤٣﴾

And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers. (Surat al-Ahzaab: 43)

So the first one is a broad form and the second one is only for the believers. Some scholars objected to this, we do not want to get into that right now but some scholars objected to that.

Ibn Abbaas said they are soft, tender, gentle, Raqeeq (رقيق) names, one of them is softer than the other:

إِسْمَانِ رَقِيقَانِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَرْقُ مِنَ الْآخَرِ

Meaning one carries more implication than the other, one is more merciful than the other. Ibn al-Mubaarak said Rahmaan, if you ask He gives. Raheem, if you do not ask, He gets mad.

THE MERCY OF ALLAH

THE ATTRIBUTE OF MERCY

Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem give the quality of mercy to Allah. We affirm to Allah what He affirmed to Himself, and what His Messenger the most knowledgeable of creation affirmed to Him.

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿الشورى: ١١﴾

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer. (Surat ash-Shoora: 11)

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ... ﴿الأنعام: ١٠٣﴾

No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the Most Subtle and Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things. (Surat al-An'aam: 103)

We have two names that give the quality of mercy to Allah, so we affirm to Allah what He affirmed to Himself, and what His Messenger the most knowledgeable human in the knowledge of Allah affirmed to Him. We do it free of any Tashbeeh (تشبيه). Tashbeeh means

comparison, we do not compare it. We do it free from Tamtheel (تمثيل). Tamtheel means the likening of the attributes of Allah, to attributes of His creation. Without Tahreef (تحريف), without distorting the name or quality. Without Ta'teel (تعطيل), without denial of any of the qualities of Allah or any aspect of it. We will talk about this in the future Inshaa Allah (in 'Aqeedah), when we talk about Tawheed al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat in depth.

Allah says:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ الْإِخْلَاصُ: ١

Say (O Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)): “He is Allah, (the) One.” (Surat al-Ikhlaas: 1)

He is One without a partner or associate to Him. That is what everyone understands, but it also means that He is One in His names, His qualities and His attributes. In His qualities, He is Ahadun Fis-Sifaat (أحد في الصفات). Ahad in His actions, no comparison to Him. That is what Ahad means, just like it means He is the One without a partner.

THE MERCY OF ALLAH

When one says Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, any praise, any verse of Allah or any glorification of Allah and you know its meaning, it is an Imaan energiser. It is an Imaan booster right there. So you charge up your Imaan many times a day if you know what you are really saying, not merely uttering it on your lips. That is why we talk about this in somewhat of depth.

The terms (Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem) give the quality of mercy to Allah, so let us take a quick glimpse at the mercy of Allah from some Ayaat and Ahaadith.

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾ الزمر: ٥٣

Say: O ‘Ibaadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat az-Zumar: 56)

Ali Ibn Abi Talib radhiallahu ‘anhu said this is the most encompassing verse of Allah in the whole Qur’an. Ibn Masood radhiallahu ‘anhu said this is the most easing verse in the Qur’an. Ash-Shawkaani said it is the most hopeful verse in the Qur’an. Why? Because it is mentioning the mercy of Allah, He is giving hope. Who is He mentioning it to? The angels who do not make mistakes, who are obedient to Allah and who are infallible? No, He is mentioning it to sinners. Not just any sinners, sinners with the utmost crimes.

In Sahih Muslim and Sahih al-Bukhari, Abu Hurayrah said when Allah created the creation, Allah wrote above His throne:

رَحْمَتِي سَبَقَتْ غَضَبِي

My mercy precedes my wrath.

In Bukhari, narrated by Umar, the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam saw a woman seeking her son and the companions were looking at the scene. When she finally found him, she embraced him tightly and she began to nurse him. It was such a moving and emotional scene. The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam and the companions were moved by that gentle, tender love of a mother to her child. At that point, the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam took the opportunity to teach the companions about the mercy of Allah. They saw the mercy of a woman, and he wanted to teach them about the mercy of Allah. The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said, do you think a mother like that would harm her son? Do you think a mother like that would put her son in a fire? They said no. They even said no Wallahi, they said Wallahi no way. While she is alive, no way. He said Allah is more merciful with His servants than this mother is with her child:

اللَّهُ أَرْحَمُ بِعِبَادِهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ بَوْلِدِهَا

Some used to make the Du’aa, O Allah, you know my mother is the most merciful human to me on the earth, and I know You are more merciful to me than my mother is. She would not let a punishment or harm get to me, so Yaa Allah I ask You to save me from any punishment.

In Sahih Muslim, Abu Hurayrah radhiallahu ‘anhu reported that the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said mercy has one hundred parts (there is one hundred parts to mercy). He sent down to the earth, one part of mercy. One part goes down to the jinn, to the human and to the insects, and it is because of this one part that they have love amongst each other. It is because of that mercy (one mercy), that they show kindness to one another. It is because of that one mercy that a beast treats its young with affection. Allah reserved ninety nine parts of the mercy for Him. This is the Hadith.

Do you understand Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem now? Does that come to mind when you hear Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem?

ATTAINING THE MERCY OF ALLAH

The best way to attain the mercy of Allah (a practical way), is to say Astaghfirullah as a form of Dhikr.

Look at the verse in Surat an-Naml, Saalih told his people:

لَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرُونَ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿النمل: ٤٦﴾

“Why seek you not the Forgiveness of Allah, that you may receive mercy?” (Surat an-Naml: 46)

Seek the forgiveness of Allah so that you may receive the mercy of Allah. Continuous Dhikr of Astaghfirullah brings you the mercy of Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem.

The mercy of Allah is unto the good doers.

...رَحِمَتَ اللَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿الأعراف: ٥٦﴾

Allah’s Mercy is (ever) near unto the good-doers. (Surat al-A’raaf: 56)

When Musa helped the two sisters with water, then he went and said:

...رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿القصص: ٢٤﴾

“My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow on me!” (Surat al-Qasas: 24)

He showed some mercy and compassion, and it came back onto him.

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ
مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ نَجَوْتَ
مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿القصص: ٢٥﴾

Then there came to him one of the two women, walking shyly. She said: “Verily, my father calls you that he may reward you for having watered (our flocks) for us.” So when he came to him and narrated the story, he said: “Fear you not. You have escaped from the people who are Dhaalimoon (polytheists, disbelievers, and wrong-doers).” (Surat al-Qasas: 25)

So when you show others mercy, it comes back at you. That is the second way of getting it.

In Sunan Abu Dawood, the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said be merciful to people on this earth, the One above the heavens will have mercy upon you. Be merciful to others on this earth. Showing compassion and mercy like Musa did to your wife, your kids, your students, your employees, those who you supervise and even the animals, it comes back at you. This is by the Hadith.

...رَحِمَتَ اللَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿الْأَعْرَافُ: ٥٦﴾

Allah's Mercy is (ever) near unto the good-doers. (Surat al-A'raaf: 56)

Anas served the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam for ten years and never once did he reprimand him. Do you think he never made any mistakes? Keep that in mind when you treat others, to attain the mercy of Allah.